(e) whether it is cost effective to obtain Milk from civil trade instead of having the burden of Military Farms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) There are 64 Military Farms in the country of which 51 are supplying milk to the Defence personnel at different stations.

(b) The total no. of livestock in the Military Farms is 23698 including 367 buffaloes. The milk production during 1993-94 was 325 lakh litres.

(c) The Military Farms are earning profit.

(d) Yes Sir.

(e) The Military Farms have been entrusted with the Prime responsiblity of supplying hygienic and wholesome milk of assured quality as per the laid down specification as milk forms an essential part of the diet of the troops. A number of Military Farms are located in the Northern and North-Eastern areas where the supply of milk from civil-trade is not sufficiently available and the troops have to depend largely upon the supply of milk from the Military Farms. Besides, the audited cost of milk produced at Military Farms is less than the average rate of milk sold by the Cooperative Federations under National Cooperative Dairy Federation of India to the civil consumers.

Meeting of Dy. Prime Minister of Russia with Defence Officials

3825. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first Dy. Prime Minister of Russia, Shri Andrei Kokoshin recently met the senior Defence officials;

(b) if so, whether any agreement or decision has been arrived at between the two at this meeting on 'Defence Ties' with India; and

(c) if so, the details of the talks held?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Shri Andrei Kokoshin, the First Deputy Defence Minister of Russia had recently met senior Defence Ministry officials in India.

(b) and (c) During the visit of Shri Andrei Kokoshin, discussions on matters of mutual interest were held. At the conclusion of his visit, a Statement of Mutual Understanding between the Ministries of Defence of India and the Russian Federation and a Protocol on the results of the officials visit of the First Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation were signed.

Involvement of private sector in defence sector

3826. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sought the help of the private sector in making the country self sufficient in the defence sector;

(b) if so, the specific plan of Government to involve private sector in the field of defence; and

(c) the details of response of the private sector thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) The Department of Defence Production & Supplies has always encouraged units in the private sector to take up production of components and assemblies for defence equipment and stores. In fact, it has been decided not to make fresh investments in defence public sector to create any facilities that are already available in the private sector.

Eight technical Committees, each headed by an officer of the rank of Major General/Brigadier or equivalent possessing technical expertise in the discipline concerned, impart assistance to private sector units by way of technical specifi-